(c) Ministry of Textiles does not find it reasonable to agree to the demands of Government of Maharashtra to enhance the import duty in view of the following facts:—

At present, cotton imports to the extent of 5 to 6 lakh bales are taking place in the country mainly in Extra Long Staple (ELS) varieties of cotton which are already in short supply in the country. This is not a large quantity in view of the domestic production at around 270 lakh bales. Moreover, cotton imports are linked to short supply situation and at 10% import duty and for those varieties which are not domestically produced: Cotton imports are primarily linked to short supply situation especially ELS cotton. In case of the import duty is increased to 60%, the domestic industry will ultimately suffer, as it will get ELS cotton at enhanced prices. It will further result in enhancement of the cost of production of good quality fabrice thereby making Indian textile industry incompetitive in domestic as well as international market.

New textiles park

4578. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have recently cleared four more textile parks, bringing the total to 30, for facilitating additional investment, employment generation and increased textile production;

(b) if so, how many such parks would be established in Uttar Pradesh;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what has been the experience of Government with the existing textiles parks, in the field of productivity of textiles and generation of more employment in textiles sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Under the Scheme for Integrated Textile Park (SITP), the initial target of 25 Textile Parks was increased to 30 Textile Parks in the 10th Five Year Plan and 30 projects have already been sanctioned. State-wise sanction is—Andhra Pradesh (4), Gujarat (7), Karnataka (1), Maharashtra (6), Punjab (1), Rajasthan (4), Tamil Nadu (6) and West Bengal (1).

(c) One Textile Park project from Uttar Pradesh, viz. Gorakhpur TexPark Private Limited, Gorakhpur, was approved, *in principle*, in July 2006. However, even after 8 months of the sanction of the project the Gorakhpur TexPark Private Limited was unable to complete the documentation of the land and Shareholders Agreement. Therefore, the Project Approval Committee (PAC) in its meeting held on 05.03.2007 decided to withdraw the sanction accorded to the project. However, the PAC has also decided to consider the revival of the project on preferential basis during the XI Plan after compliance with the stipulated condition related to land.

(d) The projects sanctioned under the SITP are at their nascent stage of implementation. Estimated annual production of these textile parks, after being fully functional, is Rs. 19,200 Crore and estimated employment generation is 5.7 lakh persons (direct/indirect).

All India Handloom Board

4579. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up All India Handloom Board (AIHB);

(b) if so, the details thereof, its tenure, functions, composition and criteria for electing/selecting members;

(c) whether professionals and technocrats are nominated as Members of AIHB;

(d) if so, the details of such professionals technocrats and non-technocrats;

(e) whether Members of AIHB nominate such members who do not have professional experience of handlooms;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(g) the steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Government has re-constituted All India Handloom Board on 28th August, 2006.